Chapter 1:

A National Park for the Golden Gate

If there is one genuine contribution that the United States has made to the application of the principles of democracy, the most likely candidate is the national park. Prior to the Age of Enlightenment— the eighteenth-century intellectual and ultimately social revolution that insisted individuals possessed natural rights and added the concept of a relationship between the governors and the governed to human affairs—the idea of a park owned and used by the people was entirely unknown. In most cultures, especially monarchies and other forms of hereditary government, parks were the provinces of the nobility and wealthy, kept and maintained for their use alone. Common people were forbidden to use designated lands, sometimes on the penalty of death. Many stood outside the boundaries of such areas and looked in with envy, conscious of the wealth of natural resources and aesthetic pleasures within and equally aware of the huge price to be paid for violating the liege's prerogative. Such parks, like the forests set aside for royal hunts, served as manifestations of power, markers of different standing in a society riven by social distinctions. They were also the flash points of class-based tension. The story of Robert of Locksley, a member of the twelfth-century English gentry who as Robin Hood took to the woods after defending a man who stole a deer from restricted land to feed his starving family, clearly illustrated the tension inherent in the traditional organization of private parklands.[1]

United States history followed a different vector, for the acquisitive nation of the nineteenth century encompassed more land than its people could then inhabit. The great beauty and uniqueness of much of this land inspired a culture that saw itself as a light to nations, one that believed it was in the process of perfecting human endeavor in a way earlier societies had not. Such lands answered the dilemma of the nineteenth century. They demonstrated a distinctiveness in nature that Americans saw in their society; they served as a counterpoint to European claims that the New World was inferior in every way. Yet nineteenth-century America was a commercial society devoted to economic wealth by the measures of industry. Parkland could not impinge on economic effort, on the process of observing, demarcating, and then harvesting the bounty of the land. The parks' contribution to the purpose of nation-building must be more valuable as symbol than reality; awe-inspiring scenery had to outweigh ranch and agricultural potential at the time momentum for a park gathered. The first parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, Sequoia, General Grant—now part of Kings Canyon, Crater Lake, and their peers, all shared a combination of beauty and inaccessibility for commercial economic purposes that made them valuable manifestations of American cultural needs instead of sources from which to wring wealth.[2]

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[1] Henry Gilbert, *Robin Hood* (New York: Blue Ribbon Books, 1912), 11-23.

[2] Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience* 3d ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 33-61; R. W. B. Lewis, *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American*

The crucial feature of these parks in the nation's ideology was the principle of their openness to all Americans. In the eyes of supporters, national parks were testimony to the patrimony and heritage of a country that intended to reinvent the relationships between government and its people. During the late nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, those people who professed goals of community instead of individualism saw in the national parks not only affirmation of their nation, but a clear and distinct way to articulate one of the prime assumptions of the time: that a society's institutions should serve the economic, social, spiritual, and cultural needs of its people. This principle, deeply ingrained in the concept of national parks—if not always in the motives behind their creation—became an underlying premise in the evolution of American conservation.[3]

This seemingly contradictory impulse revealed much of the goals and pretensions of the United States as the twentieth century began. Economically and politically powerful families wanted both the feeling of European aristocracy, the sense of having large areas devoted to aesthetic and ultimately recreational purposes, while supporting the democracy that Americans were certain made their nation special. The process of creating a nation that sprawled from the Atlantic to the Pacific challenged many of the ideas of democracy, but in these huge natural parks, Americans could see the fruition of their nineteenth-century idea, a transcontinental nation that practiced democratic ideals. As the twentieth century dawned, no more powerful proof of their commitment to democracy existed than the patrimony of national parks.

Yet an enormous gap existed between the rhetoric of the time and the actuality of the national parks that were created. The language of democracy trumpeted openness, but the parks Americans created catered to only one segment of American society, the people with the time and resources to travel and the education to regard nature as part of their cultural heritage. The Americans who traveled to parks were the winners in the transition to industrial society. The ones who might most benefit from such public patrimony usually lacked the resources, inclination, and even the awareness that such parks existed. As democratic institutions, early national parks functioned more as symbols than as participatory reality.

The San Francisco Bay Area served as one of the key points of genesis and promotion of the idea of national parks. The queen city of the West at the turn of the twentieth century, San Francisco enjoyed a beautiful setting that could not help but inspire an appreciation of scenery. People's beliefs in the beauty and value of the natural environment and the wealth that the community held provided other obvious precursors of support for national parks. The institutions spawned there played essential roles in shaping the conservation movement around 1900. California's mountains, especially the rugged Sierra Nevada, fostered a sense of longing among wealthy urbanites who faced cultural transformation from which they benefited economically, but who felt spiritually and sometimes even morally impoverished. Residents responded by making the wild outdoors the visible symbol of their longing for a simpler, less urban past. In essence, they sought to have the benefits of industrialization in their lives and to use a small part

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West as Myth and Symbol (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), 3-50, 123-32.

[3] This is not to discount the debunking of the famed creation of the myth of the national park idea at a Yellowstone campfire. The story of deciding that Yellowstone should be held as a national treasure did happen. The motives were hardly as pure as Nathaniel Pitt "National Park" Langford later claimed; for the mythic view, see Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), 43-44; John Ise, *Our National Park Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1961), 15; for the revised view, see Runte, *National Parks*, 36-45; Richard West Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 9.

of the wealth they created to maintain a pristine natural world, away from the smoke and thunder of a modern city.[4]

With the enigmatic Scot John Muir, the emblematic "John of the Mountains" as a living symbol, this local conservation movement gained national momentum. Muir's wilderness philosophy led to the creation of the Sierra Club, which counted many Bay Area notables among its founders and early leaders. The movement also was connected to national figures. The University of California at Berkeley produced the first two leaders of the National Park Service, Stephen T. Mather and Horace M. Albright, as well as the President Woodrow Wilson's secretary of the interior, Franklin K. Lane, who brought Mather to Washington, D.C., to run the parks.[5]

San Francisco and its environs became a hotbed of conservation sentiment at the start of the twentieth century. Displaying both their democratic instincts and political power, community leaders advocated huge natural parks, not for themselves they believed, but for the nation. Strong and widespread support for national parks, especially among the most influential segments of the community, characterized the region. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Bay Area legitimately claimed the title of the urban area most thoroughly devoted to national parks.

The national parks that Bay Area residents so touted were large natural areas, far from urban centers such as San Francisco and Oakland. In the formulation of the time, places that merited protection from development were "sacred," while those that could be developed for commercial uses were loosely labeled "profane." Influential conservation leaders, deeply involved in economic development, understood and supported this distinction, for it allowed them to achieve an important end for the privileged class of the turn of the century—the creation of permanent places that protected them from the chaos of modernity on which their wealth depended. These leaders did not see a contradiction in developing one kind of land and protecting another. In this they were part of their moment, best expressed in the divided mandate the National Park Service received at its founding, to "maintain in absolutely unimpaired form and to set aside for use."[6] Division of space into sacred and profane seemingly created parallel universes of pristine nature and industrial development. The seventy-five years that followed the creation of the Park Service proved these seminal ideas hopelessly contradictory, but as the century began they were generally regarded as entirely compatible.

Against this backdrop of rapid growth and social change, the enthusiasm for a national park in the Bay Area gathered powerful momentum. The rise of progressivism in California played a significant role. During the late nineteenth century, Muir and the Sierra Club had been active advocates of national parks, especially Yosemite Valley, then a state park about one hundred and forty miles east of San Francisco. Yosemite's combination of values resonated as

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[4] T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: AntiModernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981); Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); Hal K. Rothman, *Conservation and Environmentalism in the American Century* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000).

[5] Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), 6-11; Horace M. Albright and Marian Albright Schenck, *Creating the National Park Service: The Missing Years* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

[6] Horace M. Albright as told to Robert Cahn, *The Birth of the National Park Service: The Founding Years, 1913-1933* (Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers Press, 1986), 69-73.

the goals of reform swept California along with the rest of the country. At the turn of the century, national parks spoke to important needs and insecurities in American society, and for San Francisco, flush with a sense of its own importance, adding such a prize was a meaningful and viable objective. The transfer of Yosemite from state park to national park status and the creation of General Grant, Sequoia, and other national parks opened up opportunities for more national parks. Success seemed to create the prospect of greater successes.[7]

Despite all the forces that indicated the viability of a Bay Area national park, a major ingredient of the park proclamation process was completely absent in the San Francisco region: there was no public domain land in the immediate vicinity. At the turn of the century, public land remained the primary building block of national parks, and it offered an enormous advantage. Congress was unlikely to appropriate money to purchase parkland, and public lands could be set aside by presidential or congressional authorization with nary a thought to cost. No one needed to allocate money to purchase land, and at the time, while the U.S. Army administered the national parks before the National Park Service was established in 1916, funds for personnel or other costs did not need to be part of the equation. In places where a ready store of public land did not exist, the federal government could depend only on gifts of land from which to fashion national parks. The power of eminent domain—condemning private property for public use—was a risky strategy. In most circumstances, such gifts were rare and occurred only under unusual circumstances.[8]

The great San Francisco earthquake of April 1906 became the catalyst for a gift of land that led to the Bay Area's first national park area. The earthquake was a deadly calamity; San Francisco had been built piecemeal, its infrastructure a combination of public and private entities all building to their own specifications. When the quake came, buildings toppled, the rudimentary water system failed, and fires engulfed the town. Days later the fires burnt out, leaving the wreckage of a city strewn across the landscape. The near-total collapse of the infrastructure during the quake gave ammunition to a Progressive Era obsession. Progressives insisted that public entities—city, county, state, and federal government—should provide cities with water, power, and other necessities of modern life. Public control would assure the equity, dependability, and fairness that business could not always be relied upon to provide. A dependable water supply remained a crucial issue in San Francisco. Despite the bay and an annual precipitation rate that exceeded twenty inches, questions concerning both the source of water and making it accessible to the public vexed private providers. In the aftermath of the quake, the problem worsened. Water was in short supply, and a number of companies scurried to fill the void with water sources, new reservoirs in particular, to supply the city.[9] It was a profit-making opportunity that certainly galled good government advocates.

James Newlands, president of the North Coast Water Company, saw the city's need as an opportunity for personal profit. Assessing potential reservoir sites, Newlands, nephew of Francis

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[7] Alfred Runte, *Yosemite: The Embattled Wilderness* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 45-56; Michael P. Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club, 1892-1970* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1988), 12-14.

[8] Hal K. Rothman, *Preserving Different Pasts: The American National Monuments* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 59-60; Duane H. Hampton, *How the U.S. Cavalry Saved Our National Parks* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971).

[9] William Issel and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco 1865-1932: Politics, Power, and Urban Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 139-64.

Newlands, the Nevada congressman who authored the Reclamation Act of 1902, came across a grove of redwoods in Marin County, owned by William Kent, a wealthy Bay Area native who returned home after a career of municipal reform in Chicago to settle on the beautiful forty-seven acre tract. Kent hailed from a family with a long tradition of reform and shared with many of his Progressive peers a distaste for monopolies. Recognizing San Francisco's desperate situation and the potential of the grove as a reservoir, Newlands approached Kent to purchase the land for a reservoir. Kent declined; he wanted the property for its beauty, often calling it the last intact stand of redwoods in the Bay Area, and emphatically stating he did not want to see it become a reservoir.[10]

When he denied Newlands' request, Kent bucked the spirit of the Bay Area in the earthquake's aftermath. The community needed a new infrastructure, and water was crucial to its rebirth. Well connected through his uncle and his business, Newlands recognized that local and state governments would support his objectives. He filed condemnation suit in state court, arguing that the public good of the reservoir exceeded Kent's right to the keep the property. A dubious argument in American statutes, Newlands' contention received a sympathetic hearing in the months following the earthquake. Progressivism policy making was predisposed to its conception of the public good and San Franciscans' circumstances were extreme. In this situation, it was easy for a local court to construe Newlands' request as a form of public service. The politically savvy Kent recognized the implicit danger in Newlands' endeavor, with California state courts likely to rule favorably on the lawsuit. San Francisco stood to benefit greatly from the private reservoir, while at the same time Newlands made a fortune through his water company. Recognizing his vulnerability, Kent devised a means to thwart the lawsuit. He sought to preserve the redwoods, not necessarily to keep the property, and he knew of a new law that allowed him to achieve his goal. His attorney sent a letter to the Department of the Interior, offering the land as a gift if the government would designate it a national monument. [11]

The Antiquities Act of 1906, the law that allowed the establishment of national monuments, was a recent but potent addition to the arsenal of conservation. Signed into law by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, the act was vague. It permitted the president to proclaim as national monuments any part of the public domain with only a signature of the executive pen. Although the framers of the bill claimed that its primary use would be the reservation of small areas of prehistoric significance, the bill was an important part of a trend that granted the chief executive considerable control over public lands. In the hands of a president such as Roosevelt, the power to establish national monuments was a valuable asset for conservation goals.[12]

Roosevelt's reliance on the Antiquities Act increased during 1907 when Congress stripped him of the power, established under the Forest Reserve Act of 1891, to proclaim national forests in fourteen western states. Finding one avenue to achieve his conservation agenda blocked, Roosevelt utilized another. The first group of national monuments proclaimed in 1906—which included Devil's Tower in Wyoming, Arizona's Petrified Forest, and El Morro in New Mexico—fit the expectations of the act's framers, but Roosevelt planned a much larger coup. The Grand Canyon faced threats of development and Roosevelt prepared to create a

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[10] Stephen R. Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (Boston; Little, Brown, and Company, 1981), 134-35; Rothman, *Preserving Different Pasts*, 61-64.

[11] Rothman, *Preserving Different Pasts*, 61-64.

[12] Ibid., 33-51.

national monument of more than 800,000 acres in Arizona to protect this powerful symbol of American intellectual and cultural transformation.[13]

Just before this defining moment in conservation and national park history, Kent circumvented the condemnation suit in California. On December 26, 1907, he mailed the deed to 295 acres of his land, including the forty-seven-acre tract targeted by the lawsuit, to Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield, son of the former president, requesting that the government accept the gift for a national monument named in honor of John Muir. Kent had not yet been served in the suit, so his action could not be construed as avoiding state jurisdiction. He urged quick federal action on his gift. Twelve days later, just two days before he proclaimed Grand Canyon National Monument, Roosevelt signed a proclamation establishing Muir Woods National Monument. Newlands' situation was inexorably altered. To obtain Kent's land for a reservoir, he now had to sue the U.S. government in federal court, a far more daunting prospect than action against one citizen. Newlands persisted until Kent agreed to sell him another tract. The North Coast Water Company dropped its lawsuit and built its reservoir elsewhere.[14]

The establishment of Muir Woods National Monument illustrated the difficulty of maintaining the sacred-profane distinction that marked earlier conservation efforts. Kent's sacred space was Newlands' utilitarian reservoir, and ultimately the resolution relied on political relationships and position, not any objective assessment of the site's merit. In short, power played an enormous role in shaping the fate of Kent's forty-seven acres of redwoods, and the issue at Muir Woods foreshadowed the tendentious battle over Hetch-Hetchy Dam in Yosemite National Park. The argument between Kent and Newlands was the first sign of a deeper rift among conservationists. Former allies found that although they agreed in principle, their objectives in specific cases differed. Simply put, they placed higher value on different sides of the same question, leading to contentiousness and acrimony among partners that threatened to fracture alliances and negate the gains of a decade of legislation.

The battle over the Hetch-Hetchy Dam shattered the illusion that only one approach to conservation existed. A valley within Yosemite National Park, Hetch-Hetchy was prime territory for the major reservoir that San Francisco needed. A seven-year battle over the dam that finally ended with its authorization in 1916 pitted longtime friends such as Muir and Kent against one another and bitterly divided the conservation movement. A few years after the gift of the woods in Muir's name, Kent said of his friend's stance against the dam that Muir "has no social sense, with him, it is God and the rock where God put it and that is the end of the story." Muir saw the damming of Hetch-Hetchy as the destruction of a natural temple. Kent and others like him recognized the damage but placed greater weight on the need for a dependable and publicly owned water supply for a major metropolitan area. When the U.S. Senate approved the dam, it fractured the loosely connected advocates of preservation and conservation. Conservation gained a triumph at the expense not of rapacious users of resources, but of its preservationist allies. By 1914, the dam was in place, inundating the valley after highlighting the inherent contradictions in conservation.[15]

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[13] Stephen J. Pyne, *How the Canyon Became Grand: A Short History* (New York: Viking, 1998); Rothman, *Devil's Bargains*.

[14] Rothman, *Preserving Different Pasts*, 62-63.

[15] Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club*, 22-29; Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 161-81.

Hetch-Hetchy so complicated relationships in the conservation movement that further efforts to create national park areas in the Bay Area were stymied for more than a decade. Instead of a coalition of like-minded individuals close to the levers of power, Hetch-Hetchy left a contentious and fractured group that did not trust one another and could hardly ally to achieve conservation goals. Despite powerful leadership and strong fealty to Muir's goals, especially after he died on Christmas Eve 1914, in the aftermath of the Hetch-Hetchy crisis the focus of the Sierra Club shifted away from San Francisco to an effort to include remote redwoods in the national park system. The dire situation of redwoods in northern California made their protection essential. Club members could agree on the need to preserve the magnificent trees; they could not yet civilly discuss the needs of the Bay Area, and so the region remained without a signature national park.[16]

By the 1920s, the move to create a larger and more significant national park near San Francisco regained some momentum. William Kent, by this time a fixture in California progressive politics, played a catalytic role. With his powerful affection for Marin County he became the leading advocate of preserving Mount Tamalpais, just above Muir Woods National Monument. Kent displayed the sometimes contradictory sentiments of conservation. At the same time that he supported preservation, he was the major force behind the creation of a railroad spur to Bolinas. The new line complemented the Mill Valley and Mount Tamalpais Scenic Railway, first built in 1896 and long known as the "crookedest railroad in the world" for its 281 curves on the way to the peak. In 1903, four years before he gave Muir Woods to the federal government, Kent founded the Tamalpais National Park Association. "Need and opportunity are linked together here," Kent told Gifford Pinchot, the leading utilitarian forester in the nation, San Francisco Mayor James D. Phelan, and other supporters at the group's inaugural meeting. Kent himself bought much of the land on the mountain and the Marin Municipal Water District, established in 1912, purchased the Lagunitas Creek drainage near Mount Tamalpais. When an effort to establish a national park failed, Kent donated the land to the state of California, and in 1928 Mount Tamalpais State Park came into being. At about the same time, one of the best local park organizations in the country, the East Bay Regional Park District, created a greenbelt in the East Bay Hills.[17] Local and state level momentum remained strong.

The combination of the Great Depression and World War II muted national park efforts in the Bay Area until 1945. The Depression was as devastating to San Francisco as it was elsewhere in the nation. The unemployment rate topped thirty percent in the Bay Area, and Oakland, which had become an industrial city and fancied itself the "Detroit of the West" in the 1920s, experienced the fate of other industrial towns. Factories closed and workers were laid off. Strong unions in the Bay Area that defended workers' rights made the social climate fractious. A number of strikes, including an eighty-seven-day general strike led by the International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) in 1934 marked the era.[18] The remedy, public works projects, was as welcome in the Bay Area as elsewhere. The most prominent of these undertakings, the Golden Gate Bridge, became not only a symbol of the Bay Area, an important

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[16] Susan R. Schrepfer, *The Fight to Save the Redwoods: A History of Environmental Reform, 1917-1978* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983).

[17] John Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1979), 31-37.

[18] Marilynn S. Johnson, *Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 17-20.

infrastructural link that also seemed to visually complete the bay, but a national symbol as well. After its construction, many who saw the bridge remarked that they could no longer imagine the space between San Francisco and Marin County without its rust-colored, elegant lines. American soldiers and sailors fighting across the Pacific linked it to their return home, predicting with muted enthusiasm "The Golden Gate in '48." The bridge was a powerful symbol. During the 1940s, physician and Sierra Club President Edgar Wayburn and noted photographer and club board member Ansel Adams proposed that the lands around the Golden Gate be designated a national monument.

World War II transformed the western states, and California was the greatest beneficiary. Not only did the state's population increase by 1.5 million between 1940 and 1944, the federal government spent thirty-five billion dollars, almost ten percent of its total expenditure between 1940 and 1946, in California. The Golden State became the heavy industrial manufacturing center west of the Mississippi River; airplanes and ships were among its primary products. Widespread prosperity resulted. Personal income in the state tripled during the war; federal expenditures accounted for 45 percent of the state's income. The once-despised Okies, drawn to California's imagined opportunities from the Dust Bowl of the 1930s, became a poignant example of the spread of personal wealth. When they returned to the Midwest after the war, many stuffed rolls of one-hundred-dollar bills earned in war industries under the seats of their new cars, a far cry from the jalopies that carried them west fifteen years earlier.[19]

The Bay Area experienced a comprehensive transformation, gaining half a million people during the war years alone. San Francisco and Oakland ports became staging grounds for the war effort. Military installations, already prominent, grew in number and size. Combat in the Pacific theater transformed half-century old patterns in the region. San Francisco became economically more significant than it had been prior to 1941, when maritime operations, printing, construction, and light manufacturing dominated the local industrial scene and downtown was only a nascent financial and service center. Although multiethnic, the city's population was ninety-five percent white when the war began. With the major exception of Asians, Oakland and the East Bay, long home to industry, was equally monochromatic. Before Pearl Harbor, nowhere in the East Bay did African Americans make up more than four percent of the population. During the war, the Bay Area's population increased almost forty percent, and diversity became typical. San Francisco's population increased by more than thirty percent, filling urban neighborhoods with newcomers, including as many as 40,000 African Americans. The long process of suburban migration began with the construction of trains, bridges, of which the Golden Gate was the first to open, and ferries to Marin and Contra Costa counties north of San Francisco. Easy commuting to the city became possible, and many embarked on this course. They followed an age-old pattern of prosperous Americans; they moved farther from the sometimes smelly and noisy sources of their wealth into often stunning hinterlands that faced ongoing development. The East Bay grew so fast that by the end of the war it exceeded San Francisco and the peninsular counties in population. By the time Japan surrendered in 1945, the Bay Area was a more crowded, more diverse, more industrial region than it had been before the bombing of Pearl Harbor.[20]

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[19] James J. Rawls and Walton Bean, *California: An Interpretive History*, 6th ed., (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993), 334-38; Eric Goldman, *The Crucial Decade and After: America, 1945-1955* (New York: Knopf, 1966); Dan Morgan, *Rising in the West: A True Story of an "Okie" Family from the Great Depression through the Reagan Years* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

[20] Gerald Nash, *World War II and the West: Reshaping the Economy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 191-201; Roger Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (New York: Oxford

Not even the experience of the war prepared California for its remarkable postwar growth. The Golden State came into its own in the aftermath of World War II, increasing in economic opportunities and population with unequaled speed. In 1962, it surpassed New York as the most populous state in the Union. Federal dollars provided the basis for much of the growth. Not only did government contracts underpin the development of numerous industries, but federal dollars supported the growth of an enormous and sophisticated transportation network. Construction and other light industries provided homes for the swarm of new residents, adding another dimension to the economy. Within a decade of Japan's surrender, California had become one of the most powerful economic engines in the nation and indeed the world. The physical plant constructed during the war fused with Cold War government contracts in its aftermath to turn the American Dream into the California Dream. In the two decades following World War II, no state was more central to the vision of what the United States could become.

California also illustrated the problems of the nation's future. Not only did smog dominate the state's skies as the freeways filled with traffic so quickly each day that many became parking lots, but the people of California lacked recreational space. In San Francisco and the Bay Area—one a small peninsula and the other limited in growth by the mountains—the need was exacerbated. A crowded city in a beautiful region, with strong blue-collar unions and powerful ethnic constituencies, demanded recreational space of the sort that the wealthy who fled the urban area possessed. In the prosperous postwar era, when anything seemed possible, the demand for public recreational space became one of many essential goals for the society of the future, the image California held of itself and its place in the nation.

The late 1950s and early 1960s provided Americans a unique opportunity to expand their national park system. In 1956, MISSION 66, a ten-year program to upgrade facilities and expand the system before the fiftieth anniversary of the 1916 founding of the National Park Service, received unqualified congressional support. Development of existing parks and the addition of new ones became goals not only for the agency, but for Congress and the public as well. In this context, the San Francisco Bay Area again came to the attention of Park Service officials. The federal government had been lax about preserving seashores and lakeshores. The first such efforts began during the 1930s, more than one-half century after the establishment of Yellowstone National Park. By the late 1950s, only one area, Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, had been established. The growth of American cities between the 1930s and the 1950s put tremendous pressure on shorelines and lakeshores, which seemed likely to become privately owned and off-limits to much of the American public. After the publication of "Our Vanishing Shoreline," a 1955 Park Service survey sponsored by the Mellon family, impetus for the establishment of national seashores and lakeshores gained momentum. When Congress established the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC) in 1958, the Park Service embarked upon a comprehensive program to evaluate shoreline resources and produced three additional surveys, "A Report on the Seashore Recreation Survey of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts;" "Our Fourth Shore: Great Lakes Shoreline Recreation Area Survey," and "Pacific Coast Recreation Area Survey." The interest spurred others to action, and in 1959, U.S. Senator Richard Neuberger of Oregon, a longtime conservation advocate, proposed the authorization of

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University Press, 1992), 19-21; Raymond F. Dasmann, *The Destruction of California* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1965), 200-2; John Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Philip Burton* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 20-22; Johnson, *Oakland and the East Bay in World War II*, 5-15.

ten national shoreline recreation areas, a new and confusing designation to add to the plethora of names that already existed for national park areas.[21]

The San Francisco Bay Area enjoyed a powerful claim on the commitment of federal resources to preserve open space. Point Reyes, to the north of the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County, was a beautiful stretch of coast mainly leased to dairy farmers since the nineteenth century. The area remained remote, for to reach it a traveler had to cross the undeveloped lands of West Marin, bordered by the scenic army posts of Forts Baker, Barry, and Cronkhite, and, after the turn of the twentieth century, Muir Woods National Monument, Mount Tamalpais and Samuel P. Taylor State Parks. To the people of Point Reyes, this mattered little. They produced butter for the outside world, often the sum of their connection to modernity, and lived in a seemingly fixed moment in the past.[22]

As national interest in shorelines and lakeshores grew, Point Reyes' remote location and the poor financial fortune of landowners made it a likely candidate for inclusion in the park system. The National Park Service revived its interest during the 1930s, when the Depression and New Deal combined to send NPS representatives to nearly every scenic spot in the nation, but only in the 1950s, with the Pacific Coast Recreation Area Survey, did efforts to preserve the area begin. By that time, freeways and suburban sprawl had spread into Marin County, piercing the quiet in which the Point Reyes area so long slumbered. A rapid response was so essential that George L. Collins, chief of the agency's planning team and a longtime Park Service professional closely connected to power in the agency, paid for publication of the Pacific Coast shoreline survey out of his own pocket. Sierra Club activity furthered the cause. In 1958, the *Sierra Club Bulletin* devoted an entire issue to the establishment of a protected area at Point Reyes.[23]

Outdoor recreation became an important social issue in a prosperous but increasingly confined society and Stewart Udall's Department of the Interior assumed responsibility for providing the public with recreational options. Americans wanted to have it all, and for the first time, they expected not only leisure time but facilities in which to enjoy recreation. The National Park Service seemed to be the logical agency to manage recreation, but Udall held an older view of the value of the park system. His preservationist tenets, expressed clearly in his 1963 bestseller, *The Quiet Crisis,* illustrated his leanings, a point of view that led him to regard national parks as places of reverence rather than recreation. Udall's vision of the national parks curtailed NPS prerogative.[24] At the moment when the National Park Service was best prepared and most inclined to manage recreation, Udall supported the establishment of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) in the Department of the Interior. He shifted recreation management to the new agency.

Public recreation had been a long-standing sore point with the Park Service. Recreation offered a ready-made constituency for the NPS, but to purists in the agency, recreational areas

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[21] Ronald Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers* (Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future, 1984), 171; n.a., *Our Fourth Shore: Great Lakes Shoreline Recreation Study* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1959), 2-14; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks,* 180-212.

[22] Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 43-44.

[23] Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 44; Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club*, 278; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 312.

[24] Stewart Udall, *The Quiet Crisis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963).

diluted the stock—in the timeworn phrase—of the national parks. The NPS had been intermittently involved in recreation management since before the New Deal, but its efforts ran into Congress' sense that the national parks meant something other than recreation. The Park Service also encountered resistance from other federal agencies who claimed the turf. NPS battles with the Forest Service over recreation were legendary, but only with the creation of BOR did resistance come from within the Department of the Interior. Faced with a much larger agency in its own department that claimed its mission, BOR immediately sought distance from the better positioned NPS, exasperating Director Conrad L. Wirth and other politically supple leaders of the Park Service. A Forest Service bureaucrat was chosen as BOR's first administrator and BOR used its resources to support recreation in nearly every federal agency—except the Park Service. This typical contest of mission and constituency compelled aggressive NPS action.[25]

At Point Reyes, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation presented little threat to the Park Service. The seashore and lakeshores surveys focused on Point Reyes, and while the area did not offer the kind of easily accessible recreation that BOR supported, it did offer recreational potential and in the Bay Area, powerful psychic cachet. Although timber and development interests opposed a reserved area at Point Reyes, the Kennedy administration's support for the goals of outdoor recreation—clearly expressed in the outdoor recreation commission's final report—and the election of Clem Miller as the congressional representative from Point Reyes and the northern coast, substantially increased the chances of inclusion in the park system. Miller strongly advocated the creation of a national reserve at Point Reyes and made this one of his primary goals in Congress. He also lobbied for inclusion of Marin County's excess military land in a park area. One of California's U.S. senators, Clair Engel, also supported the park. Sierra Club leaders were instrumental in founding the Point Reyes Foundation, reflecting the powerful interest among Bay Area residents in preserving the wild coast. Another group, Conservation Associates, which included NPS veteran George Collins among its founders, acted as an intermediary between industry and conservationists. Even when Pacific Gas & Electric announced plans to build a nuclear power plant at Bodega Bay, north of the proposed seashore, interest in Point Reyes did not diminish. After the 1962 ORRRC report categorized the need for urban recreational lands as urgent and after much lobbying, Congress passed the Point Reyes National Seashore bill in August 1962 and President John F. Kennedy signed it into law on September 13, 1962.[26]

Authorization was only the first step in the process of preserving wildland. Point Reyes was a second-generation national park, created not from the public domain, but by purchasing lands from private owners, exchanging tracts with businesses, and relying on the cooperation of

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[25] Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 64-65; Udall, *The Quiet Crisis*; James Bailey, *The Politics of Dunes, Redwoods, and Dams: Arizona's 'Brothers Udall' and America's National Parklands, 1961-1969*, (Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 1999); Hal K. Rothman, "'A Regular Ding-Dong Fight:' Agency Culture and Evolution in the Park Service-Forest Service Dispute, 1916-1937," *Western Historical Quarterly* 26 n. 2 (May 1989): 141-60.

[26] "Congress Asked to Probe Action on Fort Property," *Haight-Cole Journal*, July 7, 1960; Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club*, 277-83; Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 45-46; Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 171-73; Judith Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms": The Life and Legacy of Congressman Phil Burton* (San Francisco: Mary Judith Robinson, 1994), 430-31. The Bodega Bay nuclear project has its own separate and contentious history. In the end, PG&E did not build a power plant there, after local resistance and the discovery that the San Andreas Fault, the most significant earthquake zone in California, bisected the site. PG&E gave the land to the state as a state park for a token one dollar payment and Bodega Head became part of the Sonoma Coast State Beaches.

state governments. The proclamation signed by Kennedy was merely a promise to create a park. The real work took negotiations and counteroffers, highlighting how much more difficult establishing new national park areas had become. Although the money set aside for land acquisition in California was insufficient and nearly a decade passed before the Park Service acquired enough ground to establish the park, Point Reyes National Seashore was a major achievement. The Bay Area had its second national park area, this one potentially larger by far and with a cultural meaning that transcended the sacred-profane distinction embodied in Muir Woods National Monument. It also set a new pattern that could be repeated elsewhere in the populous metropolitan area. Point Reyes became the cornerstone of a drive to establish a major national park area in northern California.

In response to the changing look of the Bay Area, residents expressed the combination of nostalgia for the past and fear of change that underpinned much of the preservation movement in the United States. As did many American cities in the late 1950s and the early 1960s, San Francisco and its surrounding communities embraced urban renewal. Conceptually a solid idea, urban renewal promised renovation of the downtown areas that became blighted as post-World War II suburban growth drew economic and social activity away from urban cores. Simultaneously it often became a way for powerful civic interests to use federal might and money to acquire land, demolish low income and minority neighborhoods under the loose rubric of "progress," and gentrify attractive urban areas. When it worked well, urban renewal temporarily resuscitated declining cities. When it became a manifestation of poorly distributed wealth and power, it could be a very divisive program.[27]

San Francisco revealed both dimensions of urban renewal's impact. Much of the city's population and especially East Bay and Marin County commuters experienced great benefits from urban renewal. A small downtown office district had long hampered the city's ability to compete as a regional, national, and international service center. To foster growth required more space, and in densely populated San Francisco, there was little room for easy expansion. North of downtown lay intact and vibrant neighborhoods such as Chinatown and North Beach; to the west, hilly topography and the prime retail and high-end hotel district, and beyond that the expensive neighborhoods of Pacific Heights and the Presidio and the military apparatus it contained. The bay stood east of downtown. The only direction available for growth was south, across one of the city's symbolic barriers, the 120-foot wide Market Street that separated affluent San Francisco from the economically disadvantaged South of Market area.[28] Development below Market Street meant greater prosperity for white-collar Bay Area residents, more and more of whom headed across bridges each day on their way to work.

From a developer's perspective, rewards for projects south of Market Street were considerable. Hundreds of acres, relatively cheap in cost and mostly populated by people who in the 1950s lacked access to the mechanisms of power, awaited innovative utilization. Urban renewal provided the vehicle fueled by federal dollars, and the city's most powerful entities lined up in support of development. Some of San Francisco's prominent planning organizations, including the Blyth-Zellerbach Committee, an offshoot of the Bay Area Council (BAC), one of the oldest planning entities in the region, the San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal

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[27] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961) is the classic attack on urban renewal and its mechanisms.

[28] Chester Hartmann, *The Transformation of San Francisco* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allenheld, 1984), 7-11.

Association (SPUR), and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA), strongly advocated development. Their influence created a parallel power base in favor of development that offset the long-standing influence of San Francisco's neighborhood organizations, working-class clubs, and unions. A coalition of developers that took shape sought to transform the city and make it into a financial center and tourist destination. The boldest among them envisioned retaking the title of the primary city in the West from the upstart to the south, Los Angeles. In this heady environment, many Bay Area residents bought into the dream of becoming the Manhattan of the West.[29]

After 1945, large-scale development goals in the United States typically encountered two related but very different kinds of issues that furthered preservation goals. In this era, American cities competed to establish a unique character based on their history, cultural attributes, and general ambience. Since the days of the gold-seeking forty-niner and accentuated by the novels and stories of Jack London, San Francisco had been known as a city with unique charm. As the 1960s began, it had yet to clearly portray its rich and complicated history, an absolutely necessary ingredient if the city was to stake a claim to the kind of high culture preeminence it sought. Urban renewal seemed the ticket to faux culture and history, precisely the kind of presentation of the past that helped cities but often hurt residents without the means or desire to participate in change. Redevelopment always prompted a twinge of discomfort, similar to the sentiments of William Kent earlier in the century. A sense of loss accompanied change, for the powerful as well as the disenfranchised. Growth meant the destruction of familiar landmarks, assuring that symbols of communities and their patterns of living would be different. Even beneficiaries felt the sense of loss.[30]

These twinned but contradictory sentiments contributed to a growing preoccupation with cultural preservation in the Bay Area. A strong and long-term military presence was also a crucial factor; the region contained numerous military reservations, forts and gun batteries, a few operational and others relics of earlier eras. Since 1850 the lands included in these reservations created de facto open space that permitted some public use. Military personnel, and increasingly service retirees, made their homes in the region. Proud of their heritage and seeking validation of their contribution to American society, military retirees took special interest in the symbols and structures of their effort. Fort Point, under the Golden Gate Bridge, became the focus of their efforts.

Built on the location of a tiny Spanish gun battery, called Castillo de San Joaquin, Fort Point was one of the first major U.S. Army installations in the Bay Area. Constructed during the 1850s, the fort became the front line of American defense on the Pacific Ocean. The Civil War never reached the fort, but it remained a barracks for the better part of the next fifty years. It was gradually incorporated into Presidio, the Bay Area's primary Army installation. In 1926, the barracks closed and the fort was abandoned. During construction of the Golden Gate Bridge in the 1930s, serious discussions about Fort Point's demolition began. Only the intervention of Joseph Strauss, the powerful and authoritarian chief engineer of the Golden Gate Bridge project, prevented its destruction. Strauss initially thought that the site offered the best location for the caisson that would anchor the San Francisco end of the bridge, but a tour of the fort persuaded

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[29] Richard Edward DeLeon, *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 41-43; Hartmann, *The Transformation of San Francisco*, 9-11, 19.

[30] Lears, *No Place of Grace*, 3-16.

him that it was worth preserving. He redesigned the bridge and moved the caisson several hundred feet. During World War II, when the threat of Japanese invasion of the West Coast seemed real, soldiers again were stationed at Fort Point. After the end of the war, the fort was again abandoned and stood vacant in the shadow of the Golden Gate Bridge.[31]

Long regarded as an outstanding example of masonry fort construction, Fort Point had been the subject of preservation interest since the 1920s. In 1926, the American Institute of Architects expressed concern about the fort's deterioration to Secretary of War Dwight Davis. After World War II, when the fort was finally and permanently shuttered, preservation advocates and military retirees combined to spur a preservation drive. In March 1947, to commemorate 100 years of American military presence at the site, the Army hosted an open house at the fort. General Mark Clark, the venerated leader of World War II who commanded the Sixth Army, then headquartered at the Presidio, proposed that the fort be declared surplus and released to an agency with the expertise to manage it. Clark's optimistic hope failed to materialize. The War Department decided not to release the fort to the War Assets Administration, the agency responsible for disposing of surplus properties.[32]

During the subsequent decade, Fort Point languished. Military property, it remained off-limits to the public except for annual Armed Forces Day celebrations. Infrequent tours took place, usually at the request of a visiting dignitary or a professional with some interest in the fort's past. A few grassroots movements that sought to preserve the fort made noise in the community, but little if any preservation work was accomplished. Fort Point simply stood decaying, and the estimates of the cost to restore it increased with each passing year. In the cultural climate of the 1950s, the impetus for protection would have to come from the grassroots.

In the Bay Area, military history and its preservation retained a sizable constituency, derived from the enormous impact of the military in the region. The Army's long presence at the Presidio and the tremendous reliance on federal spending during and after World War II created a large pool of people who respected military endeavors and owed their economic prosperity to its mechanisms. By the late 1950s, when California surpassed New York as the state that received the largest percentage of defense contracts and the San Francisco Bay Area contained no fewer than forty separate military installations, many people with close ties to the military reached the stage of life where preservation was a worthwhile investment of their time and energy. In 1959, a group of these people—military retirees and civilian engineers impressed with the structure—formed the Fort Point Museum Association. They raised funds for preservation and lobbied for the establishment of a national historic site at the fort. A decade-long grassroots movement to save the fort from decay took shape. With the Sixth Army's moral and financial support, the association cleaned up the fort grounds, built safety barricades, sponsored special events, hosted school groups and civic organizations, and entertained growing numbers of weekend visitors.[33] The public began to perceive Fort Point as more than an abandoned military installation.

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[31] John A. Martini, *Fort Point: Sentry at the Golden Gate* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Park Association, 1991), 3-39.

[32] Ibid., 40.

[33] Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961: From Warfare to Welfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 340-1, 346-52; Nash, *World War II and the West*, 200-1; Martini, *Fort Point*, 47.

At about the same time, a vibrant cultural community in the Bay Area took advantage of the growing interest in the publicly preserved past to seek another kind of federal perquisite. Powerful efforts to create state and local open space helped seed a climate that valued public parklands, and even in the heyday of California, national parks were a coveted prize. National park areas had long been regarded as marvelous additions in most areas of the country, but until the New Deal, NPS area designations other than "national park" were neither economic prizes nor powerful cultural symbols. They lacked the cachet that accompanied federal development money and the revenue generated by visitation of the crown jewels of the system. Most were second-class sites, areas passed over unless the agency received extraordinary levels of funding. After World War II, new national park areas proliferated as the nation self-consciously broadened the themes included in this primary form of official commemoration. A new park area might well be the ticket to construction contracts and other kinds of development. With the beginning of MISSION 66, national park areas became economic engines as well as markers of historical, cultural, and scenic significance. Residents of the Bay Area recognized the emerging twin fold advantages of inclusion in the park system.[34]

In the San Francisco region, the combination of interest in cultural and economic development translated into three designations, two as individual park areas and the third as a national landmark. A clear tie between the military experience and cultural preservation began when the Presidio was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1962. Official preservation took nonmilitary forms as well. In 1964, the John Muir National Historic Site was established in Martinez, northeast of Oakland, to commemorate the life of the great preservationist. After his marriage, Muir lived in Martinez, his wife's hometown, and operated her family's large fruit ranch. The Bay Area added another cultural park more than a decade later. The Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site in Danville, east of Oakland, was authorized in 1976 and established in 1982 to commemorate the achievements of the famous American playwright. The new parks suggested that national parks had become more important pieces of federal largesse as the military considered downsizing its presence in the Bay Area.

By the early 1960s, the Bay Area faced significant economic challenges closely related to the changing nature of the military presence. The San Francisco region competed with other western cities for federal dollars, but like many similar areas, northern California was limited by its military facilities. It had been the western capital of shipbuilding, an advantage as long as sea power was a crucial military activity. The rise of aerospace limited the Bay Area's fortunes. Especially during the early 1960s, the momentum shifted away from the Bay Area to southern California, long a chief rival. The Bay Area had research laboratories, Lawrence Livermore and NASA-Ames Research Laboratory in particular, but the bulk of its military support apparatus was blue-collar and industrial, especially the docks and warehouses that supported America's overseas expeditions. In an increasingly highly technological industry, the Bay Area lagged behind greater Los Angeles, with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena and the massive aerospace industrial presence.[35]

One manifestation of the shift in federal emphasis from blue- to white-collar endeavors was the divestiture of excess federal land, a process that occurred throughout the country.

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[34] Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 53-54, 70-71; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 181-91; Rothman, *Preserving Different Pasts*, 89-118.

[35] Lotchin, *Fortress California, 1910-1961*, 335-45.

Beginning in the 1850s, the military had always held enormous reservations of land in the Bay Area, and in the twentieth century, its reach expanded. The military quickly acquired land for installations before, during, and after World War II, and by the end of the 1950s, other federal agencies, states, cities, and communities clamored for title. Often, military officials were willing to give up the properties. The cost of maintaining land was high and few Pentagon officials wanted to rankle always-delicate regional relationships by holding onto land that they did not really need. Across the nation, military and defense-industry land became parks, forests, public projects or private developments. In one of the most dramatic of these situations, between the late 1940s and 1980 the Los Alamos National Laboratory gave away more than sixty percent of its nearly 60,000 acres in New Mexico.[36]

In the Bay Area, federal divestiture began with the new decade and grew in scope and scale. The Park Service was slow on the uptake. Although noted conservationist Edgar Wayburn worked to transfer these lands to the park system, the Park Service was uninterested. In 1961, the military turned over to California the undeveloped areas of Fort Baker, across the Golden Gate from the Presidio, to be used as Marin Headlands State Park. Angel Island State Park followed a few years later. In 1962, the Department of Defense declared Fort Mason surplus property after transferring the remaining military functions to the Oakland Army Base. The opportunity excited local interest in a number of ways. In August 1964, San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 472-64. It requested the establishment of Fort Mason as a national historic site, and if that could not be achieved, asked the General Services Administration (GSA) to give Fort Mason to San Francisco as a park and recreation area. The process was typical; excess federal land had enormous potential for cities if they were adapted to new purposes.

The real contest during the divestiture process was the battle for the famous federal penitentiary on Alcatraz Island. After the Mexican-American War in 1848 and the United States' annexation of California, Alcatraz Island served as a lighthouse, a well-armed fort, a military prison, and finally after 1934, as the federal system's most vaunted penitentiary. The hardest of the hard cases found their way to "Uncle Sam's Devil's Island," as one reporter labeled the facility. With the appearance of Al "Scarface" Capone, "Machine Gun" Kelly, and other notorious criminals, Alcatraz became a national symbol, full of the mystery and fear that mainstream society attributes to its deviants.[37]

Penitentiaries enjoy an unusual almost prurient popularity with the American public, and Alcatraz Island, known as The Rock, possessed a particularly terrifying reputation. Everything about it seemed brutal. It drained even the most hardened criminals. Tough guys were reduced to whimpering, and released convicts complained of the rigidly enforced silence in which they were forced to live. Nor was the property particularly comfortable. The cool San Francisco Bay climate crumbled the masonry structures, and salt water corroded the plumbing. By the early 1960s, Alcatraz required at least $5 million for maintenance and repairs. The enormous cost of shipping everything to The Rock, even fresh water, drove expenses skyward. The penitentiary became untenable, a relic of an era with a vision of imprisonment as punishment rather than the rehabilitation that rose to the fore in the 1950s and 1960s. In June 1962, U.S. Attorney General

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[36] Hal K. Rothman, *On Rims and Ridges: The Los Alamos Area Since 1880* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 289-91.

[37] John A. Martini, *Fortress Alcatraz: Guardian of the Golden Gate* (Kailua, HI: Pacific Monograph, 1990), 3-98; James P. Delgado, *Alcatraz: Island of Change* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Park Association, 1991), 7-38.

Robert Kennedy announced that Alcatraz would be phased out of the penitentiary system. On March 21, 1963, the prison closed and the last inmates transferred off the island to the maximum security facility at Marion, Illinois. The last prisoner, Frank Weatherman, told reporters: "it's mighty good to get up and leave. This rock ain't no good for nobody." An era came to an end. Alcatraz was no longer a prison; unneeded by the federal government, its future remained unclear.[38]

To many, the island seemed the ultimate prize and no shortage of claimants followed the April 1963 General Services Administration announcement that Alcatraz Island was excess property. It was not an ordinary piece of property. Alcatraz enjoyed a powerful cultural cachet in many different circles, and long and arduous debates about its use ensued. The interest stretched from Washington, D.C. across the country. In March 1964, the President's Commission on the Disposition of Alcatraz Island was empaneled. Two months later, the commission recommended the island be used to commemorate the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco, but no action followed. The proposal seemed impractical, and in subsequent years no one came up with a viable alternative. The cost of repairs on the island was daunting, the logistic problems of moving people and supplies enormous, and for many agencies, strapped with growing costs and finite resources, the island remained appealing, but looked more and more as if it were a management nightmare. By 1968, most public entities gave up on the island. Nearly every federal and California state agency indicated to the General Services Administration that Alcatraz Island was not in its plans.[39]

Alcatraz was too important a symbol to simply let slide away, and Bay Area governments searched for a way to use the island. The city of San Francisco became interested in acquiring the island in 1968 and asked for development proposals. Almost 500 different proposals were submitted. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation revived its interest as well, commissioning studies of Alcatraz and nearby Angel Island. The most important of these, "Golden Gate: A Matchless Opportunity," built on more than twenty years of ideas for a park in the region. As the 1960s came to a close, the value of decommissioned federal lands in the Bay Area was apparent. Questions of use and administration remained entirely murky.[40]

"Golden Gate: A Matchless Opportunity" played a catalytic role in initiating the park proclamation process. "The bureaucratic spark," Doug Nadeau recalled, that helped generate support for the park was "a crash project" prepared by a small government planning team December 4-9, 1969 entitled "A New Look at Alcatraz." Based upon this document, the Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel made the decision to authorize the preparation of a conceptual plan for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Although local support alone eventually might have succeeded in securing legislation to establish the park, Congress typically relied on the Park Service to recommend new park areas. At the time "A New Look at Alcatraz " was in preparation. no one else proposed a national park at the Golden Gate. Nor was the study team aware that Ansel Adams and Edgar Wayburn had earlier made such a proposal. The planning process was innovative. To prepare the conceptual plan for the park, which became the basis of NPS support of authorizing legislation, the Park Service assembled a planning team that

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[38] Delgado, *Alcatraz*, 36; James J. Jacobs, *Stateville: The Penitentiary in Mass Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); Tom Wicker, *A Time to Die* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1975).

[39] Delgado, *Alcatraz*, 39.

[40] John A. Hussey, *Fort McDowell, Angel Island, San Francisco Bay, California* (San Francisco: National Park Service 1949, reprinted 1981); Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, *Golden Gate: A Matchless Opportunity* (San Francisco: Department of the Interior, 1969).

included representatives from outside agencies, a novel concept. This small gesture foretold the park's signature pioneering in public involvement. The team included Michael Fischer of SPUR and Tom Malloy of S.F. Recreation and Park Department. Many of the ideas in this conceptual plan appeared in the 1980 General Management Plan. Even more, the plan "literally introduced Amy Meyer to the concept" of a park, Nadeau recalled. "She of course picked up the ball and ran with it much further than any of us had dreamed." [41]

Angel Island was the scene of a concerted effort by the state. As early as the 1940s, it was considered as a state park, and efforts gained momentum in the 1960s. In 1966, the best opportunity for development came when State Senator J. Eugene McAteer engineered $560,000 for development of the state park. The decision was widely lauded by the press and the public.

As the question of Alcatraz remained unresolved, San Francisco and the surrounding communities became ground zero for the American Cultural Revolution of the 1960s. The Bay Area had always treasured its idiosyncratic self-image, and during the decade, it enjoyed the cultural space in which social revolution flourished. Many San Franciscans opposed the norms of American society long before it became fashionable to do so. North Beach and its "Beats" operated in a cultural netherworld in 1950s America. The Freeway Revolt of the 1950s, when San Franciscans attacked and defeated an intricate freeway system designed for their city, illustrated that the Bay Area valued itself in a way different from the rest of the nation. Neighborhoods led the charge against freeways; ethnic and class-based communities and neighborhoods were more concerned with their character and regarded progress with great—and largely negative—gravity. In 1959, to the shock and dismay of the California Department of Highways, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted down seven of ten planned freeways through San Francisco, including one through Golden Gate Park and another on the waterfront. George Moscone and Willie Brown, who both went on to prominence, led the fight against the freeways; it energized the Sierra Club and Edgar Wayburn, leading to the development of a powerful slow growth movement well ahead of the rest of the nation. In 1950s San Francisco, an early version of the quality of life issues that later vexed American society played a significant role in slowing urban development. That attitude continued into the 1960s, as ordinary San Franciscans battled freeways they regarded as a portent of doom.[42]

The anti-freeway fight reached into western Marin county too. Conservationist Edgar Wayburn recalls "I began to encounter this in the early 1950s, when there was a proposal by the State Highway Department—now CalTrans—to expand the Shoreline Highway, Highway One, from its present two-lane, winding road, to a four-lane freeway... We [the Sierra Club] opposed that very strongly... if the highway were to go through, not only would it bring a great deal more traffic to the area, but the powerlines and water supplies would soon follow. This was in the whole interest of suburban expansion or not, and even in that day, I had the idea that more of this area of west Marin could become public land."[43]

Across the bay in Berkeley, a movement that reshaped the definition of individual rights in American society erupted over the issue of political organizing on the University of California-Berkeley campus. Borrowing the techniques and strategies of the Civil Rights

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[41] Doug Nadeau to Stephen Haller, January 23, 2002.

[42] Chris Carlsson, et. al., *Shaping San Francisco* (San Francisco: Bay Area Center for Art and Technology, 1998), CD-ROM, has an excellent section on the Freeway Revolt; Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 430; Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1968); Hal Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the U.S. Since 1945* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1998).

[43] *Edgar Wayburn interview by Stephen A. Haller, February 8, 2002, Park Archives and Records Center, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.*

Movement in the South, the Free Speech Movement (FSM) reinvented the prerogatives of the individual in American society and set off the student revolts of the 1960s. From FSM came the antiwar movement, which focused on bringing the American involvement in Vietnam to a halt. In one of the countless demonstrations that dotted the late 1960s, Berkeley students marched on the Oakland Induction center with the goal of closing it down. They succeeded for a day, a prelude to the October 1969 antiwar moratorium and the march on the White House by 40,000 people the following month, the high points of antiwar activity in the United States.[44]

At about the same time, a loosely constructed and conceived movement, detached from the political struggles of the day and utopian in character, also found a home in the Bay Area. Descended at least in part from the Beats, the hippies of San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury neighborhood created a new consciousness. They did not see the point of battling what they called the "straights." They aimed for a new reality, assisted by psychedelic drugs, that would run parallel to the temporal world. Labeled the counterculture, this loose grouping offered another of the countless variations on the mainstream that came to characterize the decade. If cultural innovation of any sort was to occur in 1960s America, the Bay Area was likely to be its focus.

In a unique way, the cultural revolution in the Bay Area and the idea of service-sector growth through urban renewal melded together to create in San Francisco an idyllic place that stood out for its culture as well as its beauty. From Tony Bennett, who left his heart in San Francisco, to Eric Burdon, who assured his audience that they would find "gentle people with flowers in their hair" in the Bay Area, to the rise of the Castro District, where homosexuality became public in a manner that it had never been in the United States, San Francisco became reinvented as the most liberal of American cities, on a par with New Orleans for its public cultural freedom. San Francisco was exotic in the best American sense, and during the 1960s, tourism boomed. With the rise of the Pacific Rim, the Bay Area also became a conduit for vast sums of Asian capital, the owners strangely comfortable in a city with American guarantees of the protection of personal property, a long history of an Asian presence, and wide-open culture. When Grace Slick and the Starship sang "we built this city on rock 'n' roll," the statement contained as much truth as hyperbole.

One resulting characteristic of the cultural revolution was increasingly stringent opposition to growth and the spread of suburbia. After 1945, suburban growth in the United States gobbled up huge tracts of land, devouring the open space that generations of Americans long took for granted. Between 1945 and the early 1970s, American suburbs grew so fast that their population eclipsed the cities they surrounded.[45] Freeways extended far into the hinterlands around every city of significance. Developers eagerly built new homes, shopping centers, and other amenities of postwar life, aided by massive federal funding for roads and highways. Many more people could enjoy the fruits of prosperity, but these came at a cost—the loss of the freedom to roam in undeveloped space. As the suburbs grew, efforts to retain that space became a prominent goal of the families who moved to these new communities. The last to come were often the first to complain about the impact of which they were an intrinsic part.

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[44] David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960's* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1984); Morris Dickstein, *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[45] Kenneth Jackson, *The Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

In the battles of the 1960s in the Bay Area, local residents cloaked themselves in the quality-of-life environmentalism that rose to the fore as Americans came to believe that they could have it all without risk. These attitudes differed greatly from turn-of-the-century conservation; quality-of-life environmentalists became extremely skilled at a strategy that would come to be known as NIMBY, "not in my backyard." They regarded themselves as entitled to freedom from the consequences of the progress that gave them leisure, offering an environmentalism that depended on the affluence of their society for its claims to moral right. As long as American society remained prosperous, such arguments held great sway. In the mid-1960s, the combination of affluence and idealism gave such attitudes a currency they have yet to regain.[46]

The struggle over development illustrated the era's tensions and hastened the establishment of a national park area near San Francisco Bay. The southern barrier of military forts provided one measure of protection from growth. By the mid-1960s, the sparsely populated, largely conservative, and mostly rural Marin County experienced rapid growth that transformed its very essence. The creation of Point Reyes National Seashore and the expansion of Mount Tamalpais State Park both served as counters to the spread of homes, roads, and the other accouterments that accompanied suburban sprawl. Both took land that otherwise might have been developed for housing, improving the opportunities for recreation—a key measure of quality of life—and simultaneously increasing property values. As Marin County became better appointed with recreational lands, it became more exclusive, and corporate and individual landowners tried to capitalize on the combination of exclusivity and easy access to the Golden Gate Bridge and convenient ferries. Residents could live in the exclusive beauty of Marin County and commute to the city, where they made their wealth. Marin County came to epitomize the affluent bedroom community, maintaining the sacred-profane distinction of the early twentieth century in an era when the designation was at best archaic and at worst selfish.

This idea led to a classic battle over the creation of a planned suburban community in the Gerbode Valley north of the Golden Gate cliffs and south of Mount Tamalpais. Called Marincello, the 18,000-person community was the brainchild of Thomas Frouge, a self-made millionaire who quit school at age fourteen and built one of the nation's largest contracting firms. Frouge joined with Gulf Oil Corporation for the development. An 18,000-person community was a huge undertaking and a politically powerful corporation with limitless resources was a good partner. In November 1964, after years of planning, Frouge announced the development. A splashy press conference kicked off a remarkable public relations and advertising campaign that touted Marincello as the future of living.[47]

The proposed development was stunning in its scope, cost, and comprehensiveness. Frouge envisioned an urban community in a previously suburban region, a "new town" based on the era's best planning principles. Density, careful planning, and self-sufficiency were to characterize the development. The planners expected minimal outbound traffic from the development; everything residents needed would be within. Housing was distributed to accommodate different income levels. Fifty apartment towers accompanied single-family homes, townhouses, and garden apartments. A mile-long central mall, 250 acres set aside for light

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[46] Samuel P. Hays, Beauty, *Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Hal Rothman, *Saving the Planet: The American Response to the Environment in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Inc., 2000).

[47] Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 55-56.

industry, and "Brotherhood Plaza," a town square encircled by churches, completed the picture. Frouge and his partners envisioned nothing less than a fresh start of a small-scale city in an era when Bauhaus-style glass and chrome monoliths had already overwhelmed historic urban space.[48]

Although the development appeared to be a winner, a struggle between Frouge and Gulf Oil halted its progress. In 1965, shortly after Frouge's unveiling of the plan, the Marin County Board of Supervisors approved the project over the objections of the Johnson administration. Undersecretary of the Interior John A. Carver expressed misgivings when he addressed a California Municipal Utilities Association meeting, and a *New York Times* editorial blasted the project. The city of Sausalito unanimously passed a resolution opposing the development and instituted a legal challenge. Opposition from the Golden Gate Headlands Committee, a grassroots organizations that later contributed members to People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area (PFGGNRA), also had to be overcome, but Marincello proceeded until a three-year legal quagmire toppled the development. Frouge could not secure the needed financial arrangements, and he and Gulf Oil filed suit against each other. The delays opened the way for opposition. Between 1964, when the plan debuted to glowing response, and the end of the decade, the dynamics of Marin County development became a contested issue. In one instance, a powerful supporter of parklands in Marin, Fred Merrill, chairman of the Fund American Companies in San Francisco, owners of 75,000 shares of Gulf Oil, contacted E. D. Brockett, Gulf's chairman, to discuss the company's plans. A publicly held company, Gulf was sensitive to stockholders' needs, especially when someone represented such a large block of shares. Marincello was ancillary to Gulf's primary business, and even after a Gulf subsidiary, Gulf-Reston, took over the development of another "new town," Reston, Virginia, Marincello seemed an increasingly bad idea. Gulf-Reston reviewed its options and plans for Marincello were quietly put aside.[49]

After Frouge's death in 1969, Gulf Oil found its position on Marincello precarious. It owned most of the land, but its shareholders in the Bay Area continued to press the company to drop plans for the development. Although Gulf-Reston disavowed Frouge's enormous development, the name "Marincello" had come to mean a threat to Marin County. Merrill and his organization put their clout in the hands of Headlands Inc., which had been formed to fight Marincello, and Gulf-Reston found an owner of a sizable block of stock opposing the company's plans. When The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which used private donations to purchase habitat and other lands for conservation purposes, approached the corporation with an offer to purchase, Gulf Oil recognized that the negative publicity generated by the development would far exceed any profit. In 1970, when the state appellate court agreed with Sausalito that the county's initial

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[48] Thomas Frouge to The Planning Commission, Marin County, September 15, 1965; KFC, Box 5, File 64, Marin Supervisors' Statements; "Marincello News Letter," n.d., KFC, Box 8, File 123, Marincello Newsletters; Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 56; Tom Wolfe, *From Bauhaus to Our House* (New York: Farrar, Strauss Giroux, 1981).

[49] "Federal Fears About Marincello," *SFC*, March 1, 1965; Alan Cunningham, "Sausalito Council Blasts Marincello,"*MIJ*, March 3, 1965; "Statement of Supervisor Peter H. Behr on Marincello, November 12, 1965; Peter D. Whitney to John A. Carver Jr., November 16, 1965; Golden Gate Headlands Committee, "Let the People Vote on Marincello!," Katherine Frankforter Collection, GGNRA, Box 1, File 6, Miscellaneous; Fred Merrill to E. D. Brockett, January 5, 1968, Katherine Frankforter Collection, Box 1, File 16, Correspondence 1967; Scott Thurber, "The Ghost of Marincello Rises Once More," *SFC*, September 15, 1970; Scott Thurber, "Polite Sparring on Marincello," *SFC*, September 16, 1970; Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 54-61.

approval of Marincello had been hasty and the entire process needed to begin again, Gulf Oil looked for a way out. On December 22, 1972, Marincello was sold to TNC. One of the project's first steps had been gates erected at the entrance to the Marincello development. After the project's demise, the gates stood decaying until 1978, when they were taken down by the Park Service. The symbolism was powerful, if by 1978 a little bit frayed. The primary vestige of private development in the Headlands came down at the hands of an agency responsible to the entire public.[50]

Alcatraz became another flash point in the cultural contests of the Bay Area. Although San Francisco failed to find a way to use the island, the former penitentiary soon returned to the headlines. In September 1969, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors incurred the ire of much of the Bay Area when it voted to lease the island to Texas billionaire tycoon H. Lamar Hunt for commercial development. Hunt planned high-end condominiums, restaurants, and other urban uses for the island, which was supposed to become a space-age counterpart to New York City attractions such as the United Nations, and the Empire State Building. The uproar was instantaneous. People all over the country wrote Secretary Hickel and other federal officials asking for intervention. Alvin Duskin of San Francisco ran large anti-Hunt advertisements in local newspapers with coupons that could be clipped and sent to the Board of Supervisors and the Department of the Interior. The mails filled with more than 8,000 of the ready-made protest coupons and the Board of Supervisors agreed to revisit its decision.[51]

When the Board of Supervisors voted to let Hunt lease the property, the decision hit hardest of all the increasingly vocal pan-Indian Native American population, learning to use its ethnicity as an advantage in local politics in a fashion similar to other ethnic groups and fashioning its own plans for the island. Somehow, the Native Americans missed the Hunt controversy. "There must have been some stories in the papers about Hunt's plans," remembered Adam Fortunate Eagle, "but somehow we had missed them." The Bay Area's Indian population already had designs on the island. They planned a cultural center that included a spiritual shrine, a museum, and a vocational training program facility. After the San Francisco Indian Center on Valencia Street burned down on October 9, 1969, the quest for the island took on new urgency.[52]

Alcatraz Island came to symbolize the injustice American Indians experienced, and urban Indians moved to solidify their claim to the island. They feared not only the decision favoring Hunt, but any similar urban development concept from the Board of Supervisors. Alcatraz Island was theirs, Indian people in the Bay Area fervently believed, and a precedent for their claim had been established. In 1964, five Lakota people seized Alcatraz Island and held it for four hours.

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[50] The Nature Conservancy, "Marincello: Park Addition Proposal to the Gulf Oil Corporation," March 23, 1970, KFC, Box 7, File 45, Nature Conservancy; John Busterud to W. L. Henry, September 8, 1970, KFC, Box 8, File 34, Gulf Oil Correspondence; Wat Takeshita, "Marincello Plan Ruled Invalid," *MIJ*, November 2, 1970; Alice Yarish, "Marincello Is Back on the Front Burner," *PS*, September 29, 1971; Pat Angle, "A Conservation Victory" An Option on Marincello," May 12, 1972, *MIJ*; Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 54-61.

[51] Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, *A New Look at Alcatraz* (Washington, D.C., Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, 1969), 16; Ray Murray, interview with Sara Conklin, 1993, GGNRA Oral History Interview.

[52] Adam Fortunate Eagle, "Urban Indians and the Occupation of Alcatraz,," in Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, eds., *American Indian Activism: Alcatraz to the Longest Walk* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 55-57.

Under their interpretation of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, all abandoned federal land once held by the Lakota reverted to them. Before the heady days of Free Speech Movement, such an action seemed eccentric, and assistant attorney general Ramsey Clark dismissed any legal standing for the action. In the more dramatic style that derived both from the Civil Rights Movement and the American Cultural Revolution, Indian people seized Alcatraz Island twice in November 1969, offering the symbolic payment of $24 in beads, trinkets, and cloth, the same amount that seventeenth-century Indian people received for Manhattan Island, New York. During the second occupation of Alcatraz, on November 20, 1969, eighty-nine people disembarked on the island and stayed.[53]

What began as a brief adventure became a twenty-month ordeal that captured national attention. The occupation offered all the ingredients of the late 1960s. An oppressed minority group sought redress of grievances and offered a program of self-improvement called "Thunderbird University." A telegenic and articulate spokesman, Richard Oakes, a native of the St. Regis Reservation in New York studying at San Francisco State University, became the occupation's most visible member. Indian possession of Alcatraz became an ongoing drama that tugged at the nation's conscience. Within a few months, when it was clear that the Indians were not going away anytime soon, President Richard M. Nixon growled at his Secretary of the Interior, Walter (Wally) J. Hickel of Alaska, "get those goddamn Indians off Alcatraz."[54] Hickel turned to the National Park Service.

The Park Service faced genuine problems as it tried to address the secretary's dilemma. Since its founding in 1916, the Park Service catered to the American mainstream, first with an elite, class-based orientation and later with an approach that facilitated automobiles and the broad group of visitors they carried. The Park Service hewed closely to its core mission for most of its first half-century. As late as 1964, only six directors had led the agency and four of them had been with the Park Service since its founding. Leaders came up through the ranks, learned the Park Service way, and implemented it when they reached the top. From Stephen T. Mather through Conrad L. Wirth, this mission meant serving visitors. In this sense, the NPS understood its core constituency—by the 1950s, people with two weeks vacation each year who chose to see the national parks, usually with their often reluctant children in tow. [55]

During the 1960s, government in the United States sought to serve a broader public than ever before. Urban and minority communities demanded all the services that more affluent groups received, and this included access to national park areas. As a result of the riots that plagued American cities after 1965, placating urban America became a significant goal of government policy. Elitism too long marked federal priorities; people from all walks of life complained, and the nation's bounty had to be more evenly distributed. In the aftermath of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which many urbanites thought catered to elites with the time, money,

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[53] Ramsey Clark to Sen. Edward V. Long, May 15, 1964, Box 1, H-14 V 1 Alcatraz, January 1972-December 1972, Historical, CCF; Troy R. Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Indian Self-Determination and the Rise of Indian Activism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 16-25; Troy Johnson, Joane Nagel, and Duane Champagne, "American Indian Activism and Transformation: Lesson from Alcatraz," in Johnson, Nagel, and Champagne, eds., *American Indian Activism*, 25-27.

[54] Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 211; Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 433.

[55] Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 59-68; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 173-232.

and inclination to spend lots of time in the woods, the need to make the traditional park system important to a wider segment of the public became paramount.

Urban national parks became the primary response, placing the Park Service in a new arena in which it had little experience. Hickel had been a developer in Alaska, but was transformed into a conservationist as secretary of the interior. Saying "we have got to bring the natural world back to the people, rather than have them live in an environment where everything is paved over with concrete and loaded with frustration and violence," he coined the idea of "parks for the people, where the people are" and offered a comprehensive proposal that included national recreation areas at Gateway around the New York/New Jersey shore, in Ohio's Cuyahoga Valley, in the Santa Monica Mountains near Los Angeles, and on lands surrounding the Golden Gate. These were the first full-scale proposals to fulfill Stewart Udall's axiom to bring "the battle lines of conservation into the cities."[56] It also gave the Park Service a chance to best the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

Despite the political opportunity, under George Hartzog, who became the Park Service's seventh director in 1964, the agency responded without enthusiasm. Many in the Park Service were traditionalists, subscribing to a definition of national significance that closely followed the scenic monumentalism favored by Mather and Albright, the agency's first two directors. Beautiful mountaintops and historic sites comprised the dominant current of such thinking; ecology, parks in urban areas with primarily recreational use, and other similar innovations were far from their priorities. Hartzog was a tried-and-true Park Service man, sympathetic to the longtime agency perspective, but he also was an entrepreneur and leader in the best NPS fashion: he looked for avenues that could expand the agency's reach and he smoothly responded to tugs from superiors in the Department of the Interior. Hartzog was supple and farsighted. His "Summer in the Parks" program took urban youth and placed them in an educational program in national parks. The program was credited with minimizing the damage to the Capitol parks from urban riots. Stewart Udall observed that Hartzog "enjoyed entering political thickets; he had the self-confidence and the savvy to be his own lobbyist and win most of his arguments with members of Congress, governors, and presidents."[57] If Nixon demanded action from Hickel and Hickel turned to Hartzog, the gracious and gregarious director would do everything in his power to satisfy the request. Parks such as Gateway National Recreation Area in New York and the one for the Bay Area more than fit the bill.

At about the same time as the occupation of Alcatraz, historic preservation in the Bay Area received a boost from renewed public interest in Fort Point. The local business community contributed to its support. Lobbyists for grocery and aluminum concerns, the wife of whose chairman of the board was an outspoken advocate of the designation of Fort Point as a historic site, pressured area congressmen to help pass a bill, and Democrats and Republicans alike joined forces. In 1968, local congressional representatives introduced bills to establish Fort Point National Historic Site. The proposals encountered little resistance; the area was small, already in federal hands, and the structure was intriguing. The House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate passed the bills, and on October 16, 1970, President Nixon signed the bill that authorized

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[56] Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 177-79, 185; Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 210.

[57] Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 178-81; Robert Cahn, "George B. Hartzog, Jr.," in *National Park Service: The First 75 Years: Preserving Our Past for the Future* (Bar Harbor, ME: Eastern National Parks and Monuments Association, 1990), 53.

Fort Point National Historic Site.[58] Although a small site, the establishment of Fort Point became a symbol of what could be accomplished through federal means. The real question became: where would the impetus originate? What might bind all these trends together to create a grand national park area?

A very typical government proposal became the catalyst that led to the establishment of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In 1969, Amy Meyer, an activist, artist, homemaker, and resident of the Richmond District, attended a meeting about excess military land and learned that the General Services Administration planned to build a football field-sized National Archives branch office overlooking San Francisco Bay near her home at Fort Miley. In the age of urban renewal and strong central government, the concept seemed feasible. Even in the late 1960s, governments acted with a sense of destiny and sometimes without considering the implications on communities, and such unsightly structures had become a hallmark of American public architecture. San Francisco was different, more tied to its cultural past and more cognizant of the significance of neighborhoods and micro-communities. Where cities all over the country simply accepted construction that destroyed historic downtowns, San Francisco erupted in indignation.

For Meyer, the idea that the government could simply put a building three blocks from her home spurred her to action. Her husband was work long hours as a psychiatrist and she was raising two small children. "I stumbled into this and said, 'gee this is interesting, what a nice little project I could work on,'" She laughed during an interview in 2002. "The next thing I knew I had this sort of tiger on my hands." She was fortunate to step into a situation in which federal planning teams had already laid the groundwork. The 1969 GSA plan and the BOR/NPS Study studies created a context in which Meyer could act and federal agencies with prepared plans could help.[59] It set her forward on a more than thirty-year career as a conservation activist.

Opposition created a coalition of disparate interests. John Jacobs, who headed the San Francisco Planning and Urban Renewal Association (SPUR), thought the proposal obnoxious, an affront to neighborhoods. Others held similar opinions. A tenacious individual, Meyer regarded the proposal as a threat to her and her neighbors' way of life, an assault on the entire Richmond District. "What I know how to do is organize people," She later ventured in a discussion of her role. She connected more than seventy neighborhood organizations and encouraged the Sierra Club to complain about the transformation of open space into a government complex. Meyer's energy was palpable and the Sierra Club appointed her leader of the chapter conservation committee, the entity with responsibility for protecting the local environment.[60] Supported by the club's influence and her unbounded energy, Meyer headed the challenge to the Fort Miley development.

For national park area proponents, the GSA proposal was a fortuitous circumstance that galvanized a number of disparate currents in the Bay Area. San Francisco's history of strong neighborhood activism created powerful grassroots constituencies that were influential in local

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[58] Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 431-32; Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fort Point Museum Association, Jan. 15, 1970; G.M. Dean to Board of Directors, Fort Point Museum Association, September 1, 1970; Dean to Board of Directors, Sept. 16, 1970; Dean to Board of Directors, Oct. 7, 1970; Dean to Board of Directors, Oct. 23, 1970, all FPAR, Box 3, A44, Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, Fort Point Museum Association.

[59] Amy Meyer, interview by Stephen Haller, February 25, 2002, 3; Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

[60] Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 431; *Jacobs, A Rage for Justice*, 211; Meyer interview, February 25, 2002, 3-4.

politics. The Outer Richmond Neighborhood Association, of which Meyer was a member, and other similar groups held clear and firm points of view about issues that affected them. They shaped dialogue about urban growth. Many of these associations had their roots in the nineteenth century and took on ethnic character as the Bay Area developed early in the twentieth century. They became reconstituted as geographic alliances in the post-World War II era. The anti-freeway battles of the 1950s and 1960s shaped these new grassroots alliances, and power drifted from working-class neighborhoods to more affluent ones. Pacific Heights, one of the more posh neighborhoods, emerged as a leading force in the city. Its residents and those of another similarly affluent district, St. Francis Woods, comprised nine of the eleven members of the Board of Supervisors, elected from the city at large, as late as the early 1970s. Antagonizing such groups was a dangerous strategy even for powerful financial and development interests; they possessed wealth, power and access, a strong sense of local and regional identity, and a history of protecting their interests.[61]

Across the Golden Gate Bridge, similar community activism enjoyed an equally long history. Edgar Wayburn, former president of the Sierra Club, was already a long-time leader in regional conservation, a visionary who understood the complicated nature of urban conservation long before such thinking became fashionable. Wayburn recognized the importance of open space close to people even as the post-war Sierra Club focused on far-away wilderness. "Wilderness begins in your own backyard," he often retorted to claims of the debased nature of urban areas. "People have to have places that they go to nearby." Wayburn anticipated the trends of the 1960s more than a decade ahead of the rest of the conservation community. His interest in Marin County was spurred by reality that in 1947, less than 1,400 acres were in reserves. In the late 1940s, Wayburn began to talk of enlarging Mt. Tamalpais State Park, a project that added more than 5,000 acres to the state park between 1948 and 1972. He envisioned even more, as early as the 1940s conceiving of an open-space link between Tomales Point near Point Reyes and Fort Funston in San Francisco.[62]

Turning even 100,000 acres of Marin County into parkland juxtaposed different visions of the region. Wayburn and his friends brought post-war vision to the area, while communities such as Bolinas and the ranchers of the Olema Valley were equally adamant about being left alone. Such communities opposed a park, but they soon feared suburban development even more. The Indian occupation of Alcatraz, the changing social climate, and the prospect of the Marincello development also demanded the attention of Marin County activists. The obvious threat of development lent an urgency to preservation and ripened the region for the grassroots organizing at which the Sierra Club excelled. Pressure for the development of the underutilized Marin Headlands military installations—Fort Baker, Fort Barry, and Fort Cronkhite—galvanized Marin County resistance. Under the circumstances, local residents regarded a park as a better option than miles of subdivisions populated by commuters. Wayburn found a conservation community in Marin, and with Katherine Frankforter, shaped an organization that sought the inclusion of Marin Headlands in a national park area. Soon called Headlands Inc., the group sought to keep excess military lands from being subdivided, using zoning, precisely the kind of mechanism that many rural people feared, as a primary technique. By preventing excess military and agricultural land from being subdivided, the organization could slow subdivision

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[61] Hartman, *The Transformation of San Francisco*, 121, 159.

[62] Michael P. Cohen, *History of the Sierra Club* ; Edgar Wayburn, interview by Ann Lage and Susan Schrepfer, 1976-1981, Bancroft Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 12.

development and preserve the qualities that would contribute to a park area. The ranching industry in Marin County, perched on the edge of major metropolitan area, recognized the advantage of these new urban allies. Instead of fighting zoning and other mechanisms, they saw in regulations a strategy that helped preserve their way of life. A diverse constituency formed that supported the idea of restricted use of much of west Marin County.[63]

The diverse grassroots energy generated around the Bay Area coalesced in an organization called People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area. It took the awful acronym PFGGNRA for its own. When Wayburn thought up the name, he remarked, "it sounds like a social disease." But despite the unwieldy handle, the organization developed wide influence. Amy Meyer became its heart and soul; as architect and founder, Wayburn applied the knowledge he had acquired in almost thirty years of conservation activism to become its conscience and voice of reason. Environmental organizations, such as the Sierra Club Bay Chapter, and development groups such as SPUR recognized that PFGGNRA was more than the typical neighborhood organization. With the close ties between environmental groups and neighborhood groups, in this case prompted by Wayburn and Meyer, a range of organizations recognized their commonality of purpose. In the end, more than sixty-five Bay Area groups joined PFGGNRA, making it one of the region's most broad-based citizens' movements. It was based in a passionate feeling for the place that persisted. "All the people I work with care passionately about this place," Amy Meyer asserted in 2002. "We love it. We think it is the most special place on the face of the earth... I would say that['s] the thing that everybody has in common, is this enormous love of the earth and the things that are on it, and particularly in this—perhaps particularly most of all—in this place." That broad base of support, its ties to power and influence, and a reservoir of public credibility put PFGGNRA in the lead in the drive for a national park unit in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The energetic and powerful U.S. Rep. Phillip "Phil" Burton of the Fifth District in California soon lent his considerable charm, muscle, and political acumen to the park project. Burton, born in Ohio in 1926, moved with his family to San Francisco just before World War II. He was a complex mix. A classic liberal closely tied to organized labor, Burton developed into a machine politician who built alliances with charisma. When that did not work, he backed reluctant allies into corners from which they could not extricate themselves without his power. A physically large man who chain-smoked and favored vodka, Burton was hardly an outdoorsman. He once said "a wilderness experience for me [was] to see a tree in a goddamn pot." Possessed of an extraordinary instinct to favor the underdog and committed to an older style of politics that demanded bringing home the bacon, Burton was in the middle of a meteoric and sometimes contentious rise to power in Congress. Although he did not represent the part of the Bay Area in which much of the proposed park was located, he intuitively understood its importance and took it on as his cause. When Wayburn brought him a truncated proposal and said he offered it because what he wanted was not politically feasible, Burton bellowed: "You tell me what you want, not what's politically feasible, and I'll get it through Congress!"[64]

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[63] Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 28, 60-62; Wayburn interview, 1976-1981, 19.

[64] Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 212; Wayburn offers a different perspective. He avers that Burton referred to Wayburn as "my guru," and tells tat when he brought the park proposal to Burton, the congressman asked: is this what you want?" Wayburn responded that it was. See Wayburn comments to Stephen Haller, February 2002.

Burton's motivations were as complex as the man himself. A champion of liberal causes, he was an early adherent to the ideas of quality-of-life environmentalism that came to fruition during the late1960s. Burton believed that government should help people to help themselves, and initially did not grasp the role of parks in that formula. He once told San Francisco writer Margot Patterson Doss that parks "were a rich man's game and I'm a labor candidate," but when she pointed out that the rich had private homes at Lake Tahoe and that "the working stiff" needed public parks, Burton was persuaded. "By God, you're right!" Burton shouted. "You'll get your parks." In 1964, he lauded the passage of the Wilderness Act as a triumph of American vision. Ever after, he regarded parks as a symbol of the good life and remained committed to the principle that everyone in a democratic and affluent society should have access to public largesse. In this respect, "parks for the people, where the people are," even with its association with the Nixon administration, was natural for Burton. It brought the benefits of an affluent society to people who otherwise might not receive them.[65]

On June 16, 1971, five days after federal marshals evicted the last Indians from Alcatraz, Burton introduced a new proposal for a national recreation area in the Golden Gate area. U.S. Rep. William Mailliard, a Republican from the Bay Area, had proposed a smaller park bill at Wayburn's earlier request. Burton was livid about the limits of the proposal. Not only did the Republican proposal circumvent him and supersede his plans, it was minuscule in comparison to his own ideas. Burton's initial Golden Gate National Recreation Area proposal reflected the verve and style of the congressman and larger goals of his conservationist friends. Wayburn envisioned the proposal as the culmination of his twenty-five year effort to Point Reyes and San Francisco. A proposal of this scope upset the existing balance of power in Bay Area land use. Political interests of all kinds squawked loudly at the proposal, the Park Service thought it far too large, and even Wayburn, its architect and greatest proponent, labeled the plan "outrageous." [66] In one dramatic maneuver, the park proposal recast the future of Marin County, moving away from commercial resource use and toward the combination of open space and bedroom community status that became common in outlaying area after World War II.

Conceived by Wayburn and Meyer, Burton's bill was audacious. In Marin, it included Forts Baker, Barry, and Cronkhite, the Olema Valley, Marin Headlands State Park, Angel Island State Park, and the former Marincello housing project. In San Francisco, Burton proposed encompassing Fort Funston, Fort Miley, Fort Mason, and Fort Point; 700 acres of the Presidio, Baker, Phelan, and Ocean Beaches, and most of the city's Lincoln Park. Together with his conservationist friends, Burton soothed local fears about the loss of the military presence and its vast economic impact at the Presidio by concentrating on Marin County. Burton also got the Department of the Interior veto power over any new development in the Presidio, a remarkable reversal of the power relationships in government that played to one of the military's fears. The Presidio had been in military hands for more than a century, and as San Francisco grew, it became the last large piece of underdeveloped land in the city. Spectacularly scenic, with acres of mature trees and pristine lawns, the Presidio had become a prize for which many would fight if the federal government ever gave it up. Burton wanted to prevent private development of the tract and with the inclusion of the post in the proposed park, offered the military a way to preserve its domain without private development pressure. If the military would concede the Presidio after it no longer needed the post for military purposes, private developers would be

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[65] Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 405-6.

[66] Wayburn interview, 1976-1981, 129.

thwarted. The disposition of the Presidio complete, developers would have to look elsewhere for land for new projects. The Department of Defense enjoyed far greater power than did the Department of the Interior, and Interior's veto was an exceptional maneuver. All in all, the proposal was unique in the annals of American park proclamation. It represented the largest expenditure of federal money to purchase parkland in American history. The cost of the 34,000-acre park project was estimated at $118 million, with $60 million for land acquisition alone. Success in the project would have created more than 100,000 acres of open space in San Francisco and Marin County, 64,000 in the Point Reyes National Seashore, 17,000 in the Marin Municipal Water District holdings, and the 34,000 acres in the proposed national recreation area.[67]

The proposal also revealed Burton's political sympathies and his penchant for outraging the conventions of politics. The Alcatraz occupation compelled some sort of government response, mostly in an effort to deflect any enhancement of the widely held sense that Indians had been unjustly treated. Mailliard's bill proposed including Alcatraz in the park. Burton left Alcatraz out, instead providing that the federal government sell the island to the Indian people who occupied it for the same $24 of legend that Peter Minuit traded for Manhattan Island in 1692.[68] Pure political theater, the gesture played well in the Bay Area. It seemed to occupy the moral high ground, an important concept in a frayed society. It acknowledged and sought to rectify old wrongs and provided for the empowerment of a minority group. While the actual transfer was unlikely in any circumstance, the statement offered a powerful pronouncement of Burton's political posture.

Burton's Golden Gate National Recreation Area bill revealed the extent of his political power and his adept maneuvering. In the initial proposal, Burton included the Presidio golf course, one of the most beautiful in the world and a prime perquisite of Bay Area military officers. When the Army screamed in outrage, as Burton knew it would, he removed the golf course from the proposal and substituted Crissy Field, the former Army Air Corps base adjacent to the bay. Crissy Field had been Burton's objective for the park; it was better suited for recreational use than the golf course, and Burton manipulated the circumstances to attain his goal. U.S. Senator from California Alan Cranston, a Democrat, supported Burton. By the middle of 1972, when Burton's bill emerged from committee, Alcatraz Island had been added to the proposed park and the broad outlines of the project were secure.[69]

The bipartisan nature of 1970s conservation assisted in bringing the project to fruition. In the early 1970s, northeastern Republicans were often among the most avid supporters of conservation. Secretary of the Interior C. B. Rogers Morton, Hickel's successor and a former governor of Maryland, championed the park. He flew over the area twice and advocated the larger version of the park. From northeastern Republican tradition that spawned so many leading political conservationists, he became a strong proponent of the park. In front of the U.S. Senate,

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[67] Jacobs, *A Rage For Justice*, 212-13; Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 431-32; Wayburn suggests that Maillard's bill was the year before, but legislative records indicate that while Maillard proposed a bill the year before, it was this bill to which Burton directly responded.

[68] Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 432.

[69] Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 214-15.

Morton argued for Wayburn's view of a larger park over the more conservative Park Service version.[70]

A range of local obstacles stood in the way of the project and most of them involved the Presidio. Because of the unprecedented transfer of city, county, and state land to the new park, a range of governing bodies had to approve the bill's outlines. Some entities stood to gain, others to lose. One, the U.S. Army, stood to lose more than it could accept. The military sought to reduce the 34,000 acres in the proposal to 24,000. This meant deleting the Presidio from the park. Although the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted to include the Presidio in the proposed park, Mayor Joseph Alioto sided with the military. He wanted the Presidio to remain under Army control and vetoed a Board of Supervisors' resolution to include it. Amy Meyer later remembered that Alioto was "very afraid we would do-in the Presidio," with all the jobs and revenue it brought into the Bay Area. Alioto's decision went against public sentiment and even the wishes of some of his powerful political allies. Even John Jacobs of SPUR, one of the most powerful pro-growth organizations in the Bay Area, favored the inclusion of the Presidio in the park; "the wolves are tending the flock," he told the supervisors.[71]

The Board of Supervisors played an important role in creating the context in which the Golden Gate National Recreation Area bill could be passed. At a U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation hearing on the question of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Supervisor Robert E. Gonzales spoke in favor of the park, which under the bill he favored would be called the Juan Manuel de Ayala National Recreation Area. He supported inclusion of nonmilitary areas within the Presidio and the controversial clause that the military be required to secure permission from the Department of the Interior for any construction project. Gonzales also wanted a provision that required the military to demolish square footage equal to any new construction in the authorizing legislation. Supervisor Robert H. Mendelsohn echoed the sentiments in an articulate speech.[72] Clearly, the park had local support in a community with a strong history of political activism in a state with great and growing political cachet.

Hurdles to creation of the park remained. In the Senate, U.S. Sen. Alan Bible of Nevada, chairman of the Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, delayed hearings and eliminated much of the Presidio acreage and Cliff House from the bill. The frustrated Amy Meyer called her counterparts in New York who advocated the establishment of Gateway National Recreation Area, regarded as a fait accompli. Rogers Morton suggested that a visit by President Nixon, then in the middle of a reelection campaign, would help the cause. John Jacobs of SPUR, a prominent Bay Area Republican, arranged a boat tour of the Bay Area. Nixon brought along powerful park

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[70] Edgar Wayburn to Stephen Haller, February 2002; Wayburn interview, 1976-1981, 128-29.

[71] Joseph L. Alioto to Robert J. Dolan, May 12, 1972, PFGGNRA I, Box 10, San Francisco Government - Office of the Mayor - Correspondence, Articles; Jerry Burns, "Recreation Area Urged for Bay-Ocean Front;" "Supervisors Eye S.F. Beachheads," *SFC*, May 8, 1971; Hartman, *The Transformation of San Francisco*, 24-31, 139-40; Meyer interview, February 25, 2002, 8.

[72] "Statement by Robert H. Mendelsohn, Member, Board of Supervisors, City and County of San Francisco, in Support of a Golden Gate National Recreation Area Before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation, August 9, 1971;" "Supervisor Robert E. Gonzales, Chairman: State and National Affairs Committee, Statement Before House Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation, August 9, 1971," PFGGNRA I, Box 10, San Francisco Government, Board of Supervisors.

advocate Laurence Rockefeller and met with Meyer, Wayburn, and others from PFGGNRA. On the former mine depot wharf at the Presidio, Nixon endorsed the proposal.[73]

Nixon's promise gave Burton considerable room to maneuver. Realizing that Nixon was committed and could not back out in an election year, the congressman immediately had his aides add land in Marin County that Meyer and Wayburn suggested but that had not been included in the measure. "Put it in," Burton told Bill Thomas, his longtime aide who had just returned to the *San Francisco Chronicle* but continued to work closely with Burton. Nixon "can't oppose it now." Burton maneuvered a compromise bill that satisfied the Army and mirrored the Senate bill. Bible scheduled hearings two days later, and after the September 22, 1972, hearing, Golden Gate National Recreation Area seemed a certainty.

One enormous obstacle remained. Burton and Armed Forces Committee Chairman Edward Hebert, also a Democrat, developed an adversarial relationship. After Burton and the Louisianian disagreed on the House floor, Hebert was livid. He decided to use his committee to block the bill and pressured Speaker of the House Carl Albert to keep it from a floor vote. The dispute started when the Armed Forces Committee overlooked Burton's initial bill. After the committee did not act, Burton did not point out their lapse. After all, the bill divested the military of considerable land and as a result of Burton's persuasive maneuvering with military officials, now included the entire Presidio, which would be transferred at the time the military declared the land excess to its needs. Hebert started a last-minute effort to derail the bill, sending a letter denouncing Burton and the bill and bringing military leaders to Congress to lobby against it. The *San Francisco Chronicle* entered the fray, calling the military's position "unconscionable." At the behest of park advocates in the Bay Area, Rep. William Mailliard, who enjoyed a better relationship with Hebert despite their different party affiliations, beseeched the chair. Hebert agreed to let the bill go. As always, Burton counted his votes in the House and knew he could pass the bill. He met with Albert, who assured him the vote would take place.[74] When the bill came before the House on October 11, 1972, Burton's count was accurate, and the junior congressman gained a major victory. The following day, the Senate passed the bill. On October 27, 1972, during the last week of his reelection campaign, Richard M. Nixon signed the Golden Gate National Recreation Area bill along with legislation to establish the Gateway National Recreation Area in New York. These election-year gifts to the states with the first- and third-largest number of delegates to the Electoral College may have smacked of politics, but they created an important social objective during the 1970s. These were national parks that were truly within the reach of ordinary people.

Burton's motives were simultaneously altruistic and pragmatic. A savvy politician, he recognized the constituency-building power of federal parks. National parks served as a medium through which he could build local support and stymie opposition. His efforts superceded those of the Park Service, which desperately wanted a major park in the Bay Area, but found its resources directed elsewhere in the early 1970s. Burton carried the agency in his powerful wake, using his political base in the Bay Area and in Washington to further the creation of the park. Even his opponents could hardly resist a park area; few argued against the idea of public recreational space in the heady idealism and affluence of the 1960s and early 1970s. Parks also functioned as a way to build support, diminish opposition, and gain power in the U.S. House of Representatives. No congressional representative ever argued against federal expenditures in

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[73] Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 214-15; Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 435.

[74] Robinson, *"You're in Your Mother's Arms,"* 435-36; Jacobs, *A Rage for Justice*, 214.

their district or state. The battle for Golden Gate National Recreation Area became the stepping stone to power for Burton as well as a catalyst for his later efforts that transformed the national park system.